



Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot *Ogdensburg, NY*

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. Since 1995, EPA has funded more than 150 Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilots, at up to \$200,000 each, to support creative two-year explorations and demonstrations of brownfields solutions. The Pilots are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the City of Ogdensburg for a Brownfields Pilot. Ogdensburg, a city of approximately eight square miles in size, is situated along the St. Lawrence and Oswegatchie Rivers on the border with Canada. Unemployment affects more than 14% of the city's 13,521 residents, and 9% live in poverty. For more than a century, Ogdensburg was home to a large number of manufacturing industries that used the river for transportation; most of the riverfront industrial sites are now abandoned. Suspected contamination at these sites, despite their riverfront appeal, has hindered redevelopment of industrial space.

Three separate waterfront sites, comprising one-third (approximately 65 acres) of the total industrial or institutional land available for development within the city, are abandoned and potentially contaminated. All of the sites are within the boundaries of a state-designated Economic Development Zone. In 1997, EPA removed more than 100 barrels of unidentified chemicals and asbestos at one location. Groundwater seepage and runoff may affect water quality as well as Significant Fish and Wildlife Habitats, part of the federal and New York State Coastal Management Program.

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Date of Announcement:
May 1998

Amount: \$200,000

Profile: The main concentration of Ogdensburg's brownfields totals approximately 70 acres of space, and comprises over 7,000 feet of waterfront property.

Contacts:

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Visit the EPA Region 2 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/r02earth/superfnd/brownfld/bfmainpg.htm>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

OBJECTIVES

Ogdensburg's Brownfields Pilot seeks to stimulate economic development of areas along the valuable waterfront through the assessment, cleanup and redevelopment of potentially contaminated properties. This will be accomplished by bringing together cooperative partners at the local, state and federal levels in a comprehensive effort to address environmental obstacles to development. The Pilot will also initiate community involvement mechanisms for cleanup and redevelopment processes.

- Educating stakeholders and potential developers about financial incentives, including a 10-year real property tax break and low-interest loans through the city's Local Development Corporation; and
- Exploring opportunities for other federal funding support (e.g., Department of Housing and Urban Development Section 108 grants) to help bring sites to their full redevelopment potential.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Developing a coordinated effort among key brownfields stakeholders, including private landholders, the city, local environmental agencies, banks, the state's Department of Environmental Conservation, and local communities;
- Using existing city and state programs to aid in brownfields identification, mapping, assessment, and cataloging;
- Designing an environmental assessment and cleanup plan;
- Conducting Phase I site assessments along the waterfront, including three municipal sites comprising more than 65 acres;
- Encouraging the use of the New York State Voluntary Cleanup Program by covering the state's Department of Environmental Conservation administrative costs associated with the program;
- Performing outreach activities to ensure public participation in cleanup and redevelopment processes;